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CHARLES AND VIRGINIA CLARK
presents

HARMONY ZHU, PIANO

**The Muriel McBrien Kauffman Family Foundation
is the sponsor of our 58th Season.**

This evening marks Harmony Zhu's first appearance with the Series and her Kansas City debut, as well as our 60th Discovery Concert since 2004.

6:00 P.M., SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2022
FOLLY THEATER
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

*Founded by William Jewell College in 1965, Harriman-Jewell Series' commitment to Kansas City
has been to bring the best of the performing arts.*

HARMONY ZHU, PIANO

Images, Book I, L. 110 CLAUDE DEBUSSY
I. Reflets dans l'eau (Reflections in the water)
II. Hommage à Rameau (Tribute to Rameau)
III. Mouvement (Movement)

Piano Sonata No. 3 in B Minor, Op. 58 FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN
I. Allegro maestoso
II. Scherzo: Molto vivace
III. Largo
IV. Finale: Presto non tanto

INTERMISSION

Prelude in D Major, Op. 23, No. 4 SERGEI RACHMANINOFF

Fantasia in F Minor, Op. 49 CHOPIN

Nocturne in C-sharp Minor, Op. 27, No. 1 CHOPIN

Variations, Op. 41 NIKOLAI KAPUSTIN

Ms. Zhu appears by arrangement with Young Concert Artists, Inc. | www.yca.org
Artist's residency activity is made possible through the
Annaliese Soros Educational Residency Fund of Young Concert Artists.

As an auxiliary organization of William Jewell College, the Harriman-Jewell Series adheres to the anti-harassment policy of the College, and is committed to maintaining an environment that is free of harassment, illegal discrimination, and unprofessional conduct. In keeping with the policy, any form of harassment by or against any person is prohibited, whether such harassment is lawful or unlawful. This policy applies to all patrons, venue staff, Series staff, performing artists, artist representatives, and third-party vendors. To report harassment, either speak to a Harriman-Jewell Series staff member, email the Series at info@hjseries.org, or call 816-415-5025.

PROGRAM NOTES

Claude Debussy: *Images, Book I* (Approx. 15 min.)

Claude Debussy's (1862–1819) impressionistic first book of *Images* is a study in contrasts and a fine example of the composer's miniaturist sound-paintings. Written between 1901 and 1905, he was quite pleased with the set, placing it "to the left of Schumann, or to the right of Chopin" in the catalogue of solo piano repertoire. "Reflets dans l'eau" is a series of mirrored, unresolved chords and one of Debussy's many water-based pieces. "Hommage à Rameau" is an austere sarabande in memory of French composer and theorist Jean-Philippe Rameau. Though Debussy liked the whole set of works, critic M. R. Cor in 1909 savaged this second movement in particular asking, "Is there anything more empty ... anything more coldly boring..." The third movement "Mouvement" is a jovial, perpetual motion piece as far away from "cold" and "boring" as one could get.

Frédéric Chopin: Piano Sonata No. 3 (Approx. 25 min.)

With his health rapidly deteriorating, Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849) composed this piano sonata in 1844 at age 34, five years before death. Composed at Nohant, George Sand's country estate, Chopin was able to concentrate his energies during the summer almost entirely on composition instead of on his busy society and teaching schedule in Paris. This sonata is unique among his works as there is no record of Chopin ever having played the piece in public, a most unusual position as his compositional process was intimately tied to his own performance. In spite of his failing health, his third piano sonata is a robust, musical repudiation of critics who found

his second sonata lacking in structure. The noble but moody first movement is contrasted by the lighter *Molto Vivace* second; the refined, supple *Largo* is made even more striking when paired with the astoundingly virtuosic finale. The piece is a culmination of an albeit short life of piano playing par excellence and contains all the typical Chopin hallmarks.

Sergei Rachmaninoff: Prelude in D Major (Approx. 5 min.)

Unlike Chopin's famous set of 24 Preludes, Op. 28 which was composed in 1838 in just a year's time, Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873–1943) took 18 years to complete his set of 24 preludes which were published in two sets and one standalone. Drawing inspiration from Chopin's earlier Op. 28, Rachmaninoff expanded the prelude's scope turning each into a character piece. Though expanded, Rachmaninoff was economical in his use of materials creating multi-sectional structures and the Prelude in D Major of 1903 is no exception. Its sustained, nocturne-like melody is omnipresent in spite of the increasing variations it is subjected to.

Chopin: *Fantasia, Op. 49* (Approx. 12 min.)

The dedicatee of Chopin's F minor *Fantasia* was one Princess Catherine de Souzzo, daughter of Natalia Obreskova of the Russian Empire. As one of many female students in his studio of the Slavonic aristocracy exiled in Paris, these women were fine musicians but unlike Franz Liszt who prioritized concertizing, Chopin's students were restricted by their social status to perform only for charity. Chopin used the title of "fantasia" to represent freedom of form and allow for romantic expression. When a student played stiffly and mechanically, he would say impatiently,

(continued on next page)

PROGRAM NOTES CONTINUED

"Do put your whole soul into it." He considered "feeling" the most essential quality for becoming a fine pianist. One of Chopin's longest, single-movement works, this *Fantasia* from 1841 is a self-contained bubble of emotion, perhaps reflecting upon the societal restriction his students found themselves in and his own unease with public performance. In a letter to Liszt, he wrote, "the public frightens me, its breath chokes me. I am paralyzed by its inquisitive gaze, and affrighted at these strange faces...." In this *Fantasia*, Chopin is at his most free, intimate, and celebrated.

Chopin: Nocturne in C-sharp Minor (Approx. 5 min.)

Irish composer John Field (1782–1837) was the father of the characteristic romantic nocturne consisting of a lyrical, cantabile melody over a guitar-like arpeggiated accompaniment. Chopin took this concept and pushed it to its breaking point. The C-sharp Minor Nocturne and its companion in the Op. 27 set, the D-flat major are milestone works in which elements of the narrative ballade are introduced. The work's modulation to A-flat major and resplendent coda imply something other than a simple work of dark imagery, and maybe in this case, it is the welcome of the dawn.

Nikolai Kapustin: Variations (Approx. 8 min.)

Ukrainian-born Nikolai Kapustin (1937–2020) played with early Soviet jazz bands such as the Oleg Lundstrem Orchestra and it's no surprise his Op. 41 contains countless jazz influences

within the classical form of variation. Kapustin regarded himself as a composer rather than an improviser: "I was never a jazz musician. I never tried to be a real jazz pianist, but I had to do it because of the composing. I'm not interested in improvisation – and what is a jazz musician without improvisation? All my improvisations are written, of course, and they became much better; it improved them." From Count Basie to Erroll Garner, the pianist is put through their paces in a fully written-out piece with every embellishment, ornamentation, and fill accounted for.

– Program notes by Lee Hartman



HARMONY ZHU, PIANO

■ Described by David Dubal as “part of the next great Golden Age of the piano,” Harmony Zhu performs regularly at prestigious festivals and venues worldwide, having appeared with orchestras such as the Israel Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra, Chicago Symphony, Detroit Symphony, Orquesta Filarmónica de Medellín with such conductors as Leonard Slatkin, Marin Alsop, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and David Alan Miller.

Harmony has performed at many festivals worldwide including the Verbier Festival, Ravinia Festival, Oxford Piano Festival, and Aspen Music Festival. She has been featured on *The Ellen DeGeneres Show*, CBC, CBS, and *From the Top*, captivating and inspiring people everywhere she goes with her extraordinary musical maturity, charming charisma, and upbeat personality.

Under the baton of Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Harmony helped open the Philadelphia Orchestra’s 118th season at its Opening Night Gala Concert, three months before touring with the Israel Philharmonic and appearing with the Detroit Symphony for three concerts. In the same year, Harmony performed as the only student pianist at the Juilliard Pre-College Centennial Gala Concert as well as the farewell gala for former Juilliard president, Joseph Polisi. After appearing as a soloist at the Ravinia Music Festival in the summer of 2018 to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Leonard Bernstein’s birth, she was invited back to Ravinia again in 2019 to perform with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Marin Alsop. Also that year, Harmony had the great privilege to be invited

as the only Pre-College student to perform at Lincoln Center’s 60th Anniversary Diamond Jubilee Gala as well as the Juilliard Spring Gala. Harmony had the honor of co-hosting the Lang Lang International Music Foundation’s Gala Concert, “Lang Lang & Friends: Reaching Dreams Through Music,” which was broadcast globally.

During the 2022–23 season Harmony will be presented in recital with Hayden’s Ferry Chamber Music Series (Tempe, AZ), and will also perform alongside distinguished YCA alum, pianist Anne-Marie McDermott, in a performance of Ravel’s *La Valse* for two pianos as part of Young Concert Artists’ special season finale performance at Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall in May 2023. She will also appear in performances with the Hawaii Symphony.

Harmony won First Prize in the 2021 Young Concert Artists Susan Wadsworth International Auditions, as well as The Alexander Kasza-Kasser Prize, The Brownville Concert Series Prize, Friends of Music Concerts Prize, The Harriman-Jewell Series Prize, and The Hayden’s Ferry Chamber Music Series Prize.

In addition to her piano studies with Emanuel Ax and Veda Kaplinsky, Harmony also studies composition with Ira Taxin at Juilliard.

Growing up as a chess prodigy, she was awarded the title of Woman Candidate Master and holds the title of World Champion of her age group after winning the World Youth Chess Championships. In her free time, Harmony enjoys reading, drawing, photography, and birdwatching.

Making Concerts Fun!

The **Harriman-Jewell Series** brings the world's best musicians and dancers to you! Discovery Concerts are always free and highlight artists who are soon-to-be superstars.

Join us after tonight's concert for a Q&A with Harmony Zhu. You can move to any open seats in the theater at that time. Photos are allowed (find us on social media @hjseries)!

We are glad you are here!

Concert Guide



Silence phones. You may take photos before and after the concert, but not during.



Bring your drinks to your seats.



Talking and texting during the performance may be distracting to the artist and those around you; save these for the 20-minute intermission or after the concert.



Clap when you like what you hear. Ms. Zhu will indicate with her body language when a piece is over.



Restrooms are located in the lobbies. You may exit and reenter between pieces. We also have an informal listening room available!

Enjoy!

Fun Facts

- The Harriman-Jewell Series started in 1965 and this year, we celebrate our 1,000th concert! (see hjseries.org/1000 for more information)
- This is our 60th Discovery Concert since starting them in 2004.
- Our artists are usually not based in Kansas City but travel in from out of town (and often, from out of the country!) to perform for you. AND most of our concerts are one-night only!
- Get a free drink or cookie at your next Harriman Jewell Series event by filling out our email survey after the concert. Look for it this week.
- We are on social media! Follow us for exciting updates and insider information [@hjseries](https://twitter.com/hjseries).

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